

How Europe Is Going After Apple, Google and Other U.S. Tech Giants

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Antitrust: European antitrust authorities [announced](#) in July a new round of charges against the company — the third set since early 2015 — claiming that some of the company’s advertising products had restricted consumer choice.

Google vigorously denied any wrongdoing in two previous European antitrust cases [linked to Android](#), its popular mobile operating system, and some of its [dominant online search services](#).

Google could face fines of up to 10 percent, or about \$7 billion, of its global annual revenue if it is found to have broken Europe’s tough competition rules.

European regulators [began formally investigating](#) the tech giant in 2010 over antitrust issues regarding search results. Over the years, competitors like Microsoft have also filed [formal complaints](#) against Google, as have media and telecommunications companies like [Deutsche Telekom](#).

Right to Be Forgotten: Europe’s highest court, the European Court of Justice, ruled in May 2014 that citizens had a so-called right to be forgotten, and that search engines, including Google, must honor some requests from users to delete links to personal information.

European regulators have since called on Google to apply the “right to be forgotten” ruling beyond the borders of the European Union. In March, France’s data protection watchdog [fined](#) Google \$112,000 for failing to comply with demands to extend the ruling across its global domains, including Google.com in the United States. Google filed an [appeal](#) in May to overturn the fine.

As of April, almost two years since the court ruling, Google [had passed judgment](#) in over 417,000 cases — roughly 571 a day — from people wanting links to certain search results to be removed, according to [the company’s records](#). It approved fewer than half of those requests, all behind closed doors, raising questions about the role of commercial interests in protecting people’s privacy.

Taxation: Margrethe Vestager, the European Union’s antitrust chief who has become the bloc’s chief tax inquisitor, said in January that she might look into the 130 million pound, or \$175 million, settlement [reached](#) between Google and the British government over back taxes. Spanish authorities in June [opened](#) a new investigation into possible tax evasion by Google, and in late May, French tax authorities raided Google’s offices there as part of an investigation for aggravated financial fraud. Google is also in discussions with Italy over back